



CHAPEL HILL STATE SCHOOL

Reading at Home in the Early Years

Dear Parents and Carers,

As part of Chapel Hill State School's (CHSS) Explicit Improvement Agenda (EIA) on the Effective Teaching of Reading, our teachers have reviewed our home reading program this term to ensure that home reading aligns with our classroom explicit teaching instruction for reading. Reading instruction at CHSS is evidence-based and aligns with the Department of Education's (DoE) [Reading Position Statement](#).

Reading is the process of decoding and making meaning from texts as shown in the theoretical framework, The Simple View of Reading shared below:

The Simple View of Reading



Gough and Tunmer, 1986; Tunmer and Gough, 1990; Hoover and Tunmer, 2020

The **Simple View of Reading** identifies components necessary for reading success. It shows that reading is the product of word reading and language comprehension. The Simple View of Reading is a settled framework to understand the components of skilled reading.

We know that our students need to have both Word Reading and Language Comprehension to attain reading comprehension success.

Parents and Carers are asked to support your child using **decodable texts and rich authentic texts using a shared reading approach** where you are encouraged to read together at home on a daily basis. Daily reading of decodable texts and shared reading provides your child with an opportunity to develop a love of reading.

We are excited this year to include 'hard copy' decodable texts for home reading in 2025. (Thank you again to our P & C for funding these resources.)

What Are Decodable Texts?

Decodable readers are specially designed books that use a controlled set of phonic sounds and words, allowing children to apply their developing decoding skills. These readers are essential for early readers as they help build confidence and improve reading proficiency by ensuring children can successfully read and understand the text using the phonics knowledge they have acquired in the classrooms.

Accessing 'Hard Copy' Decodable Readers at Home

Our Prep to Year 2 students will have access to decodable texts for home reading starting from next week.

Students in Prep and Year 1 will be sent home one 'hard copy' decodable text each week for them to read with their Parents/Carers. Year 2 students who are still working on their word reading will also be allocated one decodable text each week. This text will be selected by the classroom teacher and will focus on revising phonics sounds (word reading) that have explicitly taught or revised by their teacher. Decodable texts should be read multiple times across the week.

Accessing Online Decodables at Home

Parents and Carers will also have access to the Decodable Readers Australia (DRA) website from next week, where your child can continue their word reading practice with other decodable texts. The DRA platform is an optional extra to support your child's development in reading. Parents are encouraged to prioritise reading the 'hard copy' text first, and supplement this with additional texts for practice using the online platform, as necessary.

The texts allocated on DRA will support your child's learning in the classroom. This personalised approach will assist and support your child to progress at their own pace and will offer the opportunity for your child to revise the word reading skills they are learning in class.

How to Get Started with Online Decodable Readers Australia

1. **Visit the Website:** Please go to [Decodable Readers Australia](#) to familiarise yourself with the platform.
2. **Login Information:** Your child's login details will be provided to you separately by your classroom teacher. Please keep this information secure.
3. **Reading Schedule:** We recommend setting aside regular times throughout the week for your child to read their allocated decodable readers. Students will be allocated **a selection of online decodable texts** and are encouraged to read their decodable texts a minimum of three times a week for 10 minutes each time.

Benefits of Decodable Readers

- **Improved Phonics Skills:** Decodable texts on DRA align with V9.0 Australian Curriculum (Systematic Synthetic Phonics requirements) and help children apply what they learn in a practical, engaging way.
- **Boosted Confidence:** Children experience a sense of achievement as they successfully decode and understand the texts.
- **Individualised Learning:** Tailored levels ensure that each student is challenged appropriately and can progress at their own speed.

How can I support my child's reading when they are reading decodable text?

It is important that a child does not randomly guess or use the pictures to work out unknown words. The focus should be on the letters and sounds and the process of blending those together to read the word. To support this strategy, you can use the Decoding Poster 'What to do if I get stuck?' that has been provided by your teacher.

Click on the link to view an example of reading (word decoding) [using a decodable text](#).

Some key features when supporting the reading process

1. Suggest to your child that they use a tracking finger to hold the position of reading and have your child slide it along as they read.
2. If an error is made, ask your child to try decoding the word again. Then re-read the complete sentence will assist with fluency and understanding.
3. At the end of the book, use the comprehension questions to check for understanding and to discuss the story that has been read.
4. Celebrate each book and the effort your child has just given!



What if my child is reading every word slowly and sounding out every word?

Some children take a little bit longer to develop automaticity in reading and that's ok. The process of sounding out words may seem laborious, but this is part of the process. Learning to read takes time and hard work! Repeated practice is the key, and we suggest your child read their decodable text multiple times across the week.

What happens when my child has completed Level 8 in DRA?

If your child has moved past Level 8 decodable texts in DRA, they no longer need to use the DRA platform. Decodable texts are designed to assist students with their word decoding. Once this skill has been mastered, your child is considered an independent reader and is encouraged to continue to read for learning and enjoyment with texts of interest.

Shared Reading at Home

Shared reading describes the interaction that occurs between an adult and a child when reading or looking at a book. Although one of the most obvious and engaging features of storybooks and non-fiction texts is their illustrations, they also provide children with access to a world of sights, sounds and words that may be quite different from what they

experience in their homes, communities and school. To assist with access to some great authentic texts, we have increased the number of books that our students can borrow at the school library visit.

An important aspect of shared reading is the conversation that occurs between the adult and child during the reading. **Pausing while reading** and **taking the time to discuss details in the story** can support your child's oral language development. The conversation might focus on the storyline, such as characters or where the story takes place; it may focus on similar experiences the child has had to those that happened in the book; it may focus on specific words; aspects of print; or concepts that are new to the child. When you read aloud to your child, they hear and learn lots of new and sophisticated words and sentences they may not hear or use in everyday conversation. If the story includes new words, it is suggested parents/carers take the time to tell your child what the word means. This will assist with developing their repertoire of words (vocabulary bank).

Please click on the following link to view a Department of Education modelled example of [shared reading](#), including the types of conversation most beneficial for children's literacy development in the early years.

What books should be used for shared reading?

In the early years of reading instruction, children engage with different books for different purposes. Virtually all children's books are appropriate for shared reading, but the best books will have rich, detailed pictures and are interesting to the child. We strongly suggest that these rich texts are reread to your child multiple times throughout the week to develop their comprehension skills, vocabulary knowledge and confidence building to develop into a lifelong love of reading.

We thank you for your continued partnership in your child's education. Together, we can help them develop a lifelong love of reading and learning.

Kind regards,

Prep to Year 2 Teachers and

HoD-C Prep to Year 1, Leia Brameld and HoD-C Year 2, Julie Williams.

